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## South Hadley reports 'earth shattering' COVID increases

By Dalton Zbierski  
Staff Writer

SOUTH HADLEY – In what has become a regular occurrence in recent weeks, South Hadley has reported a record increase in positive COVID-19 cases. From Dec. 1 to Dec. 8, 41 additional confirmed cases and 37 new contact cases appeared in town.

"The increases are earth-shattering. A month ago, on Nov. 10, 2020, we had 252 cases confirmed. It took us from March 1 to get to 252. Over the next 32 days, we went to 368," said Michael Sullivan, South Hadley Town Administrator. "When you think about it in those terms, in just over 30 days, we jumped another 116 cases."

As Sullivan alluded to, South Hadley's accumulative confirmed case count now stands at 368, as of Dec. 9. There have also been 357

Please see COVID, page 5

By Dalton Zbierski  
Staff Writer

SOUTH HADLEY – For much of the year it was unclear if the South Hadley & Granby Chamber of Commerce Annual Holiday Stroll would occur. When all was said and done, the community's holiday spirit could not be suppressed last weekend.

"It's a really fun night in a time where we don't have a whole lot to celebrate or to do," said Chamber President Michelle Theroux.

For the past two decades, the stroll has been held on the Town Commons and served the purpose of uniting hundreds of community members. On account of the COVID-19 pandemic, the traditional model was implausible this year.

Fortunately, the Beers & Story Funeral Home on Newton St. offered up its property, which enabled a drive through

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**South Hadley & Granby Chamber of Commerce President Michelle Theroux stands next to Santa Claus during last Friday's Holiday Stroll.**

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#### Ledges closed for the season



# Happy Holidays!

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# SHELD Fiberhoods progress

By Dalton Zbierski  
Staff Writer

SOUTH HADLEY – As it attempts to bring residential gig-speed internet to all corners of town, the South Hadley Electric Light Dept. is steadily expanding its Fibersonic network. SHELD General Manager Sean Fitzgerald discussed the progress during a Dec. 3 Commissioners Meeting.

"We've had a lot of action these past few months. We have 11 connected fiberhoods; completely constructed and connected. We have 620 connected customers and six more fiberhoods under construction right now," said Fitzgerald.

Each day, SHELD completes four to six Fibersonic installations, said Fitzgerald. By year's end, he expects that 700 installations will be finished.

"We're firing on all cylinders here for Fibersonic installs, and the feedback we're hearing is very positive from customers, who really like the speed and the quality of the internet service," said Fitzgerald. "We have 2,791 website submissions, [residents] who have expressed interest in the service, which is a significant number and growing."

SHELD recently launched a Fibersonic application for smartphones, allowing residents and small businesses to manage their networks at their leisure. Construction on the department's new facility near Plains Elementary School is also proceeding smoothly.

"If you've driven by the Plains Central Office location, you'll see that the gates are up, the pavement is poured, the ground is restored and we're actually going to be relocating a trailer from Stony Brook to Plains tomorrow. The hardened trailer is being scheduled for some time between now and March so progress has been significant on our central office improvements," said Fitzgerald.

With progress, however, can come problems, as appeared to be the case during last Thursday's meeting. Peter McAvoy, a member of the SHELD Municipal Light Board who resides on Jewett Lane, expressed his frustration that it will take years for the Fibersonic technology to reach his residence.

McAvoy believes that his neighborhood was put to the back of the list due to its underground utilities. He shared his concerns with the board on Dec. 3, acknowledging his disappointment that the most expensive installations have seemingly been saved for last.

"I don't like being sort of last-served because it's going to be hardest to put here. I don't think that the delivery of

utilities should go in that order. It's unfortunate," said McAvoy.

Fitzgerald responded, stating that SHELD must complete nearly 7,000 passings to install Fibersonic in all areas of South Hadley. At the moment, SHELD has completed 2,012 passings.

While 32 fiberhoods will be completed over the course of the next four years, SHELD has only installed 11. Six more will be installed in 2021.

Fitzgerald explained to McAvoy that a definitive strategy is in place to ensure that SHELD doesn't go overbudget. Hiring an outside contractor to quicken the pace, as McAvoy recommended, is not currently an option.

"That sentiment is shared by a lot of customers," said Fitzgerald. "It can be a financial problem for us. If we do speed up construction, we will have to bring in more electric crews. It can be done, but it does change the plan; the economics of the plan anyways."

McAvoy held firm to his stance that the SHELD should expedite the process. He feels as though the current approach is unjust in its design.

"My point is simply this; we're all equal recipients. That's everyone out here," said McAvoy. "I don't think that we should be assessing every cent when it's really about the delivery of a service. That's what makes a municipal different than an investor-owned utility. Everything costs money. Our job is to deliver services to the people of this town."

Fitzgerald made it clear that SHELD's plan has been carefully mapped out in an effort to stay under budget and remain efficient.

"I want to acknowledge that there is a huge desire, which is a great problem to have. The second problem is just the speed at which we can construct," said Fitzgerald. "We do plan to construct the entire town, and we're looking at a couple months shy of four years to finish the entire town. What makes our business plan work is when we do the work mostly ourselves."

Michael Conchieri, SHELD's Financial Manager seconded Fitzgerald's statement. He informed McAvoy that his neighborhood wasn't randomly assigned to the bottom of the installation list.

"Part of the reason why we're doing what we're doing is to get the most passings as we can at the least cost during the initial phase. The additional revenue that we get from that will only help to pay the project off," said Conchieri.

Dalton Zbierski is a Staff Writer and can be reached at dzbierski@turey.com.

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# Childcare cohorts to start in-person Monday

By Melina Bourdeau  
Staff writer

SOUTH HADLEY – The decision to bring what South Hadley School Committee members referred to as the "childcare cohort" back to school was one which was uncomfortable for each member in its two-hour meeting on Tuesday.

However, while one cohort will begin in person on Monday, Dec. 14, Plains School has gone fully remote due to staffing issues related to quarantining.

During the meeting, interim Superintendent Diana Bonneville addressed the matter, urging the board to take up Plains as a separate issue.

"There is a dashboard on the website with tallies so every time (there is a COVID-19 case) either in person or remote, or any school. We have a district total of current numbers and the year to date," Bonneville said. "Our current numbers (this week) are nine people tested positive – that's all the schools, all the students and adults, remote and in person. Another thing we've been keeping tabs on is the number of people that we are quarantining. At Plains, we started off first with three people, then it was six and now we're up to nine people who are pending. It doesn't mean all adults or all kids, but it poses operational challenge to staffing issues."

As of Dec. 8, there are a total of 19 positive cases in the district since the schools began tracking in September, according to Bonneville.

She said she recommended the school go remote and committee mem-

bers endorsed her decision.

The committee then began its discussion about bringing more students in person, referring to the next cohort as the "childcare cohort" due to the needs of families to have children in school not only for their education, but because of great childcare needs.

Moving on to the three other schools, the committee voted in favor of bringing back the "childcare cohort" with a vote of four to one on two motions.

The first motion was to allow the "childcare cohort" students in the middle and high school students to return.

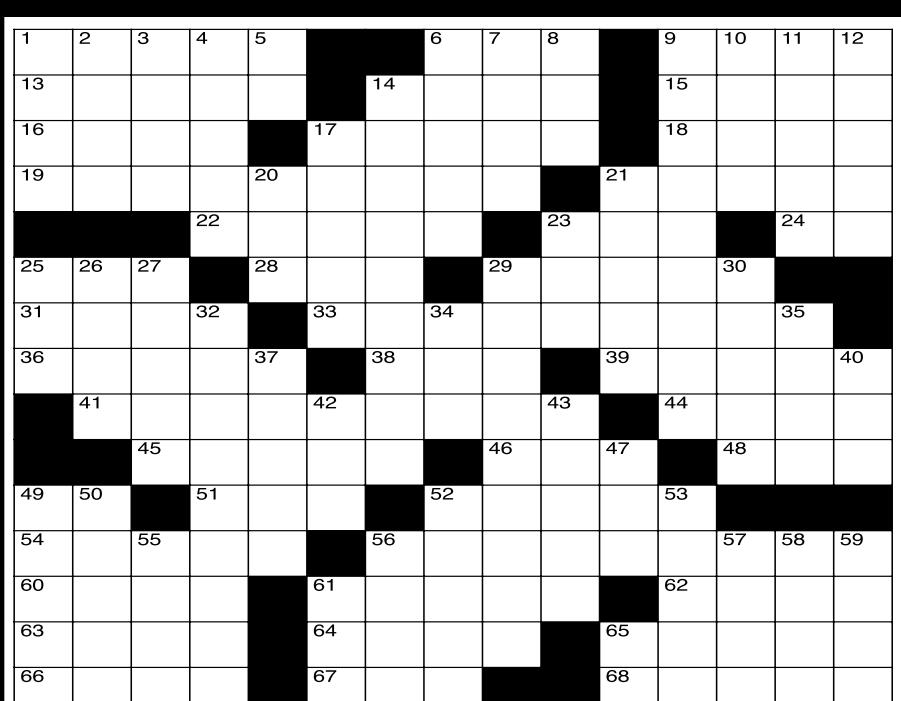
Bonneville explained to the change would not be dramatic.

"We would need very few additional staff to go in, we do need to have counselors, speech and language, occupational therapists, physical therapists, but at the middle school and high school level, that would be specific to the needs of the in-person cohort," she said. "Nothing would change at the high school; it would be two additional students and right now we have two teachers, a handful of paraprofessionals and we're perfectly happy with that."

Board members approved to bring back the "childcare cohort" middle and high schoolers back on Monday, Dec. 14. School Committee member Charles Miles opposed the motion.

During the board's discussions, Miles gave a presentation about the factors which help to determine the risk of having students in person, which he said is currently "medium/high."

Please see **CHLD CARE**, page 8



# ► Neighbor News

## Mass Central Rail Trail feasibility study released

*State considers it an important trail*

By Eileen Kennedy  
Staff writer

**REGION** – Eventually, the Mass Central Rail Trail will run from Northampton to Boston, and MassDOT has released a feasibility plan detailing what is needed to complete the 68.5 mile section. It runs from the end of the Norwottuck Rail Trail in Belchertown to the I-495 area at the Hudson/Berlin town line, and the state says it is a priority to complete. When the entire trail is built out it will run for 104 miles.

The study focuses on the 68.5 miles that run between Belchertown and Hudson, of which 17.5 miles already exist and 51 miles need to be built out. The state has rated the difficulty level of a number of pieces that still need work, with 20.2 miles rated moderately difficult to implement and 22.4 miles rated as highly difficult. Nine new bridges would be necessary to complete the trail, according to the state.

This study divides the MCRT analysis into three segments. The first one goes from the eastern-most part of the Norwottuck Rail Trail in Belchertown to the Massachusetts Central Rail Road corridor at the east bank of the

Swift River in Bondsville, a village of Palmer. The second segment goes from the Swift River in Bondsville to the Ware River in Barre. The third section goes from Glenwood Road in Rutland to Stone Road in Berlin, which is just east of the I-495 underpass, Berlin/Hudson town line. Within those segments are highly detailed notes about what obstacles are in the way, including whether it is a physical problem, such as a missing bridge over a river, or an ownership problem as some pieces are in private hands. It also documents where it may be necessary to leave the trail for short pieces.

### Economics

“It’s terrific to have this study, and to continue to draw attention to this huge resource in our community,” said East Quabbin Land Trust Executive Director Cynthia Henshaw, who was asked by the state to review the plan before it was released.

The EQLT has most recently developed a half-mile of the trail in Ware, near the trust’s Frohloff farm on Church Street. It was built as an accessible trail so it is wide and covered in crushed stone. The plan is to connect it to the trust’s already existing portions in New Braintree and Hardwick. The trust is also working on a trail from the farm



**The Norwottuck Rail Trail in Belchertown.**

to Grenville Park, which is also on Church Street in Ware.

Henshaw said more fully developing the trail between towns, such as Ware and Hardwick, can help residents travel to local jobs and shopping. She also said it provides a safe place for people to enjoy nature and to get exercise without being near cars.

Craig Della Penna, who has been involved in the trail for a couple of decades, said developing trails always benefits the communities it runs through. He is a Northampton Realtor who specializes in selling houses close to rail trails.

“When trail projects come through the result is economic development,” he said. “Local small businesses benefit and will locate there, and it’s more lively.” He pointed to Gilbertville’s Rose 32 bakery and restaurant as the type of business that could be attracted to locating along the trail. Part of the existing trail runs between Gilbertville and New Braintree. Rail trails help make communities more viable and liveable, he said. The state used the Gilbertville-Ware covered bridge as one of the sights on the trail during their recent conference last week. Della Penna also runs a website about the MCRT at [www.masscentralrail-trail.org/](http://www.masscentralrail-trail.org/), which has old and new maps.

In fact, the economic vibrancy the trails bring to communities has been part of the reason the state has put an emphasis on creating trails, Della Penna said. The state now has a Trails Committee made up of multiple agencies and they meet every few weeks, he said.

### History

The Massachusetts Central Railroad originally ran west from Boston for 104 miles to Northampton, and the state wants to see it use as much of



Turley Publications staff photo by Paula Ouimette

**A feasibility study to complete the Mass Central Rail Trail was recently released by MassDOT, showing how a stretch between Belchertown and Hudson/Berlin town line can be finished. This is a sign in the New Braintree section of an already existing section of the trail.**

the original rail corridor as possible. It was once possible to get on a train in Boston’s North Station and travel to Northampton’s Union Station, although Paul Jahnige, with the state’s Department of Conservation and Recreation said at a MassDOT conference this week the railroad was abandoned in the early 1900s. A hurricane in 1938 severely damaged the line, and over time some of the line could not even be seen.

### Importance

Trails in general, and the MCRT specifically, has been identified as a high priority for the commonwealth’s trail and greenway system, according to the report. It involves MassDOT’s statewide Bike and Pedestrian Plans, the Department of Conservation & Recreation’s Commonwealth Connections, and various local and regional plans, according to the report.

At last week’s virtual 2020 Moving Together conference, MassDOT’s John Bechard described it as a “critical backbone” in creating shared use trails in the state, and said it was the top rail trail priority in the state. He described the feasibility study as

a way of kicking the completion of the trail into higher gear, and determining what needs to be done to make it a reality.

The study details approximately 55 miles of undeveloped segments along the MCRR corridor are currently in public, private or conservation ownership. About 33 miles of this trail have already been constructed as off-road, multi-use greenways.

An additional 22 miles of former railroad corridor are owned by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority and leased by DCR between Coburn Road in Berlin and Linden Street in Waltham, according to the study. This 22-mile corridor is in varying stages of planning, design and construction by the municipalities, DCR and Eversource Energy to develop the 10-foot wide, paved MCRT.

“This trail will knit together slowly over time,” Della Penna said. “It may take a generation.”

The full feasibility report can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/lists/mass-central-rail-trail-feasibility>. Comments and suggestions from the public will be taken through Dec. 1 at <https://tinyurl.com/y6j9r7bp>.



**The Warren Wright Road parking area for the Norwottuck Rail Trail in Belchertown. The state recently released a feasibility report for a portion of the Mass Central Rail Trail, running from Belchertown to the Hudson/Berlin town line.**

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# Neal praises House passage of pro-cannabis 'MORE' Act

U.S. Rep. Richard E. Neal, chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means, was among those who voted in favor of the "Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment and Expungement Act of 2020" last week.

The bill, which seeks to reclassify cannabis as a non-dangerous substance with medical benefits and decriminalize sales and possession nationwide, passed the House 228 to 164. If it passes the Senate and becomes law, the legislation, introduced by N.Y. Rep. Jerrold Nadler, would essentially create a U.S. model of the cannabis policy adopted by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

"Today's House consideration of the Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment and Expungement Act of 2020 or the MORE Act marks an important step in mitigating the impacts of the historically racist war on drugs," Neal said after the Dec. 4 vote.

"This legislation will reform our federal criminal laws while also making investments in and empowering communities of color and those adversely affected by current unjust policies," he said.

Specifically, the proposed law removes marijuana from the list of scheduled substances under the Controlled Substances Act and eliminates criminal penalties for an individual who manufactures, distributes, or possesses marijuana.

The bill also makes other changes, including the following:

replaces statutory references to marijuana and marihuana with cannabis

requires the Bureau of Labor Statistics to regularly publish demographic data on cannabis business owners and employees



Courtesy photo

**Curaleaf is an adult dispensary in Ware. On Dec. 4, the U.S. House passed a bill that, if it becomes law, would make it easier for similar businesses to open in states where they are now prohibited. It also would expunge the records of people convicted on cannabis-related charges.**

establishes a trust fund to support various programs and services for individuals and businesses in communities impacted by the war on drugs

imposes a 5% tax on cannabis products and requires revenues to be deposited into the trust fund, makes Small Business Administration loans and services available to entities that are cannabis-related legitimate businesses or service providers

prohibits the denial of federal public benefits to a person on the basis of certain cannabis-related conduct or convictions

prohibits the denial of benefits and protections under immigration laws on the basis of a cannabis-related event (e.g., conduct or a conviction)

establishes a process to expunge convictions and conduct sentencing review hearings related to federal cannabis offenses

directs the Government Accountability Office to study the societal impact of cannabis le-

galization

"This change to federal law does not undermine the ability of states to apply their criminal laws to marijuana as they see fit. Instead, it makes marijuana a federally regulated substance that is subject to the FDA's regulatory authority and federal taxation. The excise tax that is established by the bill is similar to those for alcohol and tobacco," Neal said.

"By creating a legal marijuana market that is subject to federal taxation, this legislation also creates an opportunity trust fund that will increase opportunities for individuals and communities affected by the War on Drugs. The opportunity trust fund will fund programs such as job training, reentry services, and substance use disorder services, as well as assistance to small businesses owned by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals."

## COVID from page 1

contact cases reported this year.

"When you take the contact cases and the probables, which they say to add in, and that gives you how many cases you likely have in your community, we've had almost 150 new cases in tiny little South Hadley since last week," said Sullivan.

The town predicts that the surge could continue into next week, as cases skyrocket throughout the Commonwealth following gatherings that occurred during the Thanksgiving holiday. While numbers are increasing, Sullivan feels strongly that South Hadley residents are remaining vigilant.

"You still have the vast majority of people being cooperative," he said. "We're still seeing people wearing masks more often and started to put additional signage up this week about wearing masks, washing hands, social distancing, staying at home and encouraging people to take those foundational approaches to COVID-19."

Sullivan noted that vigilance is not only critical at this time, "it's the whole ball of wax." While South Hadley has not yet publicized its strategy for managing the distribution of COVID-19.

COVID-19 inoculations, Sullivan relayed that an important development was announced by the Baker-Polito administration on Wednesday afternoon.

The state's first shipment of 59,475 doses of the Pfizer vaccine was ordered on Dec. 4 and will be delivered to 21 hospitals spanning eight counties, as well as the Dept. of Public Health's immunization lab.

Doses will soon after be delivered to 74 hospitals, spread throughout all 14 counties in the Commonwealth. By the end of December, the state expects that 300,000 first doses of the vaccine will be delivered in Massachusetts.

Doses of the first vaccines, manufactured by Pfizer and Moderna, will be administered three to four weeks apart. The Commonwealth anticipates that it will distribute approximately 2 million doses to "priority population groups" by the end of March 2021.

The anticipated vaccination phases and timeline goes as follows. Phase One will begin this month and stretch into February of 2021, as the state will administer vaccines to clinical and non-clinical healthcare employees working in the presence of COVID-19.

First responders, long term care facilities, rest homes, assisted living facilities and congregate care settings such as shelters and corrections all fall under Phase One.

Phase Two of inoculations will begin in February and conclude in April of 2021. Individuals at high risk for COVID-19, most essential workers and adults over the age of 65 fall under the second phase.

Phase Three, the final phase, is expected to begin in April. As part of Phase Three, vaccines will be made accessible to the general public.

Last month, the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services announced that the government has partnered with large chain pharmacies and networks representing pharmacies to distribute COVID-19 vaccines.

The list includes, but is not limited to, Costco Wholesale Corp., CVS Pharmacy, Inc., Publix Super Markets Inc., Rite Aid Corp., Topco Associates, LLC, Walgreens, Walmart, Inc., and Winn-Dixie Stores Inc.

Dalton Zbierski is a Staff Writer and can be reached at [dzbierski@turley.com](mailto:dzbierski@turley.com).

# Volunteers sought for for Town Administrator Screening Committee

SOUTH HADLEY — The South Hadley Selectboard invites interested residents to apply to serve on the South Hadley Town Administrator Screening Committee.

"We look forward to having a resident participate in the process of selecting South Hadley's next town administrator," said Jeff Cyr, chair of the Selectboard. "It is important to us that residents are involved throughout the screening process."

The duties of the seven-member Town Administrator Screening Committee include reviewing résumés of applicants, selecting approximately six to nine semi-finalist candidates, interviewing those candidates, and selecting a total of three to five finalists to forward to the Selectboard for interviews.

The deadline for receipt of applications to serve on the Town Administrator Screening Committee is Dec. 31, at 12 p.m.

It is anticipated that the members of the Town Administrator Screening Committee will need to attend a maximum of four meetings to fulfill their

committee obligations. Once finalists' names are presented to the Selectboard, the Town Administrator Screening Committee will have completed its mission.

"Town Administrator Screening Committee members will have a critical role in determining finalists for this important position," said Sarah Etelman, vice-chair of the Selectboard. "We are pleased to be able to call upon residents' experience, knowledge, and insight."

South Hadley has hired the consulting firm Community Paradigm Associates to assist in the town administrator search process. The consultant will guide and assist Town Administrator Screening Committee members in their efforts.

To submit an application to serve on the Town Administrator Screening Committee, please send your letter of interest and/or résumé via email to [KMaher@southhadleyma.gov](mailto:KMaher@southhadleyma.gov)

For more information, please contact Kristin Maher, executive assistant to administration, at [KMaher@southhadleyma.gov](mailto:KMaher@southhadleyma.gov) or 413-538-5030, x6135.

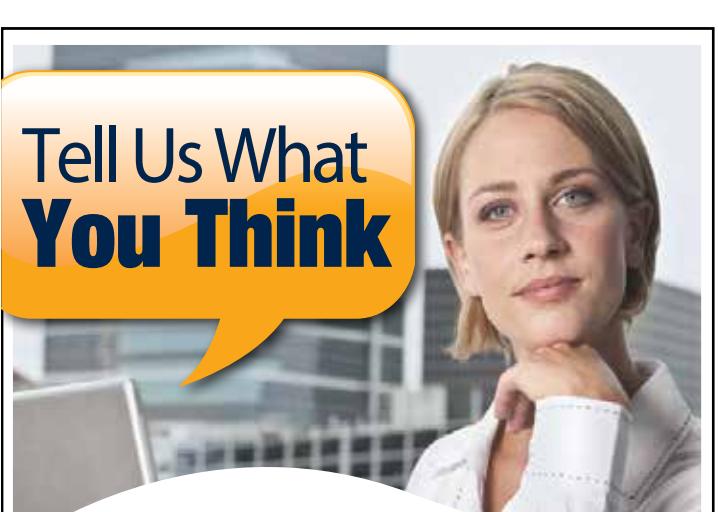
## Community invited to give input on next town administrator

SOUTH HADLEY — The South Hadley Selectboard is asking residents to share their thoughts on the preferred qualifications, skills, and experience they would like South Hadley's next town administrator to possess.

The Selectboard has contracted with the consulting firm Community Paradigm Associates to facilitate the search process. Residents are encouraged to email their thoughts to: [CitizenInput@communityparadigm.com](mailto:CitizenInput@communityparadigm.com).

"We are very interested in hearing residents' recommendations regarding the expertise and qualifications they would like to see in their next Town Administrator," said Jeff Cyr, South Hadley Selectboard chair. "It is important that South Hadley's citizens are an integral part of the Town Administrator selection process."

For more information, please contact Executive Assistant to Administration Kristin Maher, at [KMaher@southhadleyma.gov](mailto:KMaher@southhadleyma.gov) or 413-538-5030, ext. 6135.



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# Opinion

## Coriander, fit for cookie-making

My family and I have been enjoying Christmas by Candlelight at Old Sturbridge Village for as long as the program has been running. Wanting to visit the Village after a long work day is through is a real testament to how wonderful this evening event is. It was there that we first sampled a coriander cookie made by a recipe from the early 19th century. We thought it was so yummy, in fact, that it became a welcome addition to our Christmas cookie repertoire. With a double batch under my belt just this afternoon, there is no time like the present to learn about this really neat, multi-purpose plant.

Most gardeners already know that coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*) is one of the few herbs that goes by two different names depending on the part of the plant used. Its foliage, known as cilantro, is used fresh in a number of culinary delights. When the plant goes to seed, known as coriander, it can be used in that stage as well, eaten whole, crushed or powdered.

I liken cilantro to be the "marigold" of the herb world. Either you love it or you hate it. I, for one, immensely dislike it and if given the chance to pick it out of my salsa I will certainly do so. Even in a restaurant. I found it interesting to learn that some people possess a genetically predisposed aversion to it, according to studies by Charles J. Wysocki, of the Monell Chemical Senses Center, in Philadelphia. To me it has a bitter taste that I have a hard time describing beyond that. Dirty? Soil-like? Most people that do dislike it have a similar lack of descriptive ability; they just can't put their finger on it, but they don't like the taste...or the smell of it.

It's funny that when my oldest daughter received her Ancestry DNA results, she was shown not to possess the genetic aversion. Well, she didn't get that from me....

Cilantro is often used in salsa and other Mexican, Asian and Italian dishes including curries, sauces, salads and soups. If you prefer to grow the plant more for its greens and less for its seeds, manage it as you would spinach. Sow seeds in the ground in the cool of the season and in succession every two weeks. It dislikes being transplanted but doesn't mind pot culture. Harvest greens rather aggressively—about one-third of the plant at a time. Just like spinach, there are slow-to-bolt varieties to choose from such as aptly named 'Slow Bolt' and 'Longstanding.' Cilantro's flowers are edible and they attract lots of beneficial insects such as lady beetles, parasitic wasps and syrphid flies.

Coriander seeds, on the other hand, have a pleasant (at least to me) fragrance once dried. The scent is easier to pinpoint too; nutty and spicy (ever so slightly) come to mind. Coriander seed is also well known in various ethnic cuisines and is a favorite in spice blends, curry being the most popular. It is also used in the making of a number of distilled spirits, herbal liqueurs and Christmas cookies as I have come to find out and favor!

The Herb Society noted that during World War II coriander seeds were coated in white or pink sugar and thrown from carnival wagons, earning the name "confections" or "confetti." When the seeds were replaced by balls of colored paper the name confetti stuck. Take this one to your next game of Cruise Ship Trivia!

It is easy to harvest the seeds. Simply let the heads dry to brown right on the plant. Clip them and place inside a paper bag; as they dry further they will open and the seeds will pop out. Even if you are only interested in harvesting the seeds, multiple plantings (or a big garden patch) are necessary to get a decent-sized harvest. Let a few drop their seeds and you will be blessed with a few self-sown plants next spring.

### IN THE GARDEN



Roberta McQuaid



### A QUOTE

#### of NOTE

“ It's been a tough year for everybody so it's just great to see the kids enjoying themselves and the families enjoying themselves and being able to get out and experience the holidays and some sense of normalcy. ”

Lt. Jason Houle  
of Fire District 1 in  
the story "A special stroll."

### OPINION PAGE/ LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the Editor have a maximum of 350 words. We require writers to include their name, address and phone number in order for our office to authenticate authorship prior to publication. Addresses and phone numbers are not published.

Unsigned or anonymous letters will NOT be published.

We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions. Libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks or defamation of character are not allowed. Deadline for submissions is Wednesday at noon.

Please email (preferred) letters to [townreminder@turley.com](mailto:townreminder@turley.com). Mailed letters can be sent to Town Reminder, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

### TOWN Reminder

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PATRICK H. TURLEY  
CEO

KEITH TURLEY  
President  
EDITOR  
Melina Bourdeau  
[townreminder@turley.com](mailto:townreminder@turley.com)

STAFF WRITER  
Dalton Zbierski  
[dzbierski@turley.com](mailto:dzbierski@turley.com)

ADVERTISING SALES  
Maureen McGarrett Hall  
[mmcgarratt@turley.com](mailto:mmcgarratt@turley.com)

SPORTS EDITOR  
Greg Scibelli  
[sports@turley.com](mailto:sports@turley.com)

SOCIAL MEDIA  
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WEB  
[www.townreminder.turley.com](http://www.townreminder.turley.com)

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### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

#### Dirt bike riders and ATVs need a place to ride

Granted conversation land is meant for hikers and those seeking peace and tranquility but those who look for adventure and challenge need a place to let loose.

Bynan conversation area in South Hadley is a precious habitat which belongs to hikers as well as four-legged creatures.

I also sympathize with dirt bikers because when I was young, more than 50 years ago, my buddies and I would ride in the gravel-pits located in various sections of Granby. The Ludlow Sportsmen's Club

had a dirt track which hosted some of the best riders in the northeast. When the track wasn't being used for competition we would spin our wheels on the same course.

To solve the conversation dilemma, perhaps an investment in securing an acre or two in a more remote place not being used for any specific purpose would serve the two-stroke engine riders well.

Bill Paul

#### Thank you, South Hadley & Granby Chamber of Commerce

On Nov. 17, the South Hadley and Granby Chamber of Commerce President, Michelle Theroux and Treasurer, Michele Lyman, were on hand to present a check for \$1,000 to Council on Aging Director, Leslie Hennessey. The generous donation will be used to fund two, senior assistance programs that offer financial support to South Hadley seniors who are experiencing a financial need during the holiday season. The cen-

ter's "Light's On" Program and the Holiday Gift Card Program are funded by the generous donations made by local organizations, businesses, and members of the community.

For more information about these programs, call Ann Andras at 413-538-5042.

Leslie Hennessey

Director  
*South Hadley Council on Aging*

### GUEST COLUMN

#### Pandemic lays bare our information problems

By Lee H. Hamilton  
*Guest columnist*

When the history of this era is written, special attention should be reserved for the prominent US politicians who dismissed or misrepresented the COVID-19 pandemic for political purposes.

The coronavirus has wreaked untold suffering and damage to this country through the deaths it's caused, the illness it's produced, the strain it has placed on the lives and well-being of health care workers, and the incredible damage it's done to the livelihoods and prospects of millions of Americans. It has been able to do this because we had a major failure of government.

To be sure, at the state level many governors have conducted themselves with forthright attention to the risks to their populations and have done their best to translate scientific and medical advice into policies designed to save lives while trying to undergird their economies. But at the federal level—with the notable exception of the effort to fast-track research and production of a vaccine—we mostly failed to mobilize resources and take the measures necessary to combat the virus, starting early this year when the virus first emerged on the West Coast.

In particular, we failed to provide a com-

prehensive, federally led nationwide strategy providing clear guidance on mask-wearing, offering resources for contact tracing, and helping states develop their approaches to quarantining for those exposed to the virus—the three legs vital for early containment.

Instead, President Trump repudiated and disregarded the advice of experts and health officials and offered a misleading narrative about the spread of the virus abating in the spring. His misinformation was picked up and amplified by news outlets and by politicians who alleged that concern about the pandemic was just a hoax peddled by President Trump's opponents and would disappear as soon as the election was over. Or, even worse, who misled Americans about hydroxychloroquine and other drugs. In other words, many Americans were fed bad information at a time when high-quality information was necessary to stem the spread of the virus and limit the number of deaths.

The result has been devastating, and not just to our public health efforts. For many decades, the U.S. has been the leader of the international order, the undisputed power, with vast wealth, economic and military power, and global reach. But our image has been tarnished badly because of the mishandling

Please see **PANDEMIC**, page 7

# South Hadley

## Ledges closed for season

Winter use regulations posted

Staff report

SOUTH HADLEY — The Ledges Golf Course is now closed for the season.

Recreation Department Director Andy Rogers said staff would like to thank all of the guests this year for supporting the Ledges in such trying times and advises on winter use regulations.

The golf course property will be open for passive recreation this winter. A face covering is required when using the facility due to Governor's orders.

For those walking the course and enjoying our amazing views, please remember to stay on the cart paths at all times and avoid walking on the grass areas, even if covered by snowfall.

Is there is enough snow for cross country skiing and snowshoeing, visitors are asked to avoid the putting greens and tee boxes to keep the grass healthy. These areas are typically raised



Archive photos

Regulations have been published for those looking to use the Ledges Golf Course during the winter.

at the ends of each hole.

For those that have dogs, the town's new dog park is available at the beginning of Mulligan Drive (just before the water tower) to help your dog stretch their legs or get them socialized.

Please use this area and not the golf course if you have a dog.

The map of the property can be found here: <https://www.southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/4119/Ledges-Golf-Course-Walking-Paths>

### PANDEMIC from page 6

of this outbreak, made worse over the last four years by our willingness to step away from alliances and international organizations. We are weaker on the world stage than we were a few years ago, and especially since the start of the pandemic.

The problem with reaching this point was summed up cogently back in October by John Halpin, of the Center for American Progress, as part of a study looking at the alarming rise in Americans' willingness to believe conspiracy theories, unfounded rumors, and already-disproven claims. "American society faces a genuine crisis in public trust in government, corporations and the media, exacerbated by wide partisan divides about who and what to believe," he said. "If we cannot agree on basic facts about what is going on in our country, there is little hope of generating consensus on what needs to be done

to control the pandemic and fix our economy. Rebuilding public trust in major institutions, and the information they provide the public, is now a national priority."

I agree. In many ways, the world of information has improved from the days when just a handful of news sources provided Americans with what we needed to know, but there was also a benefit to those times: we might have disagreed about how to tackle national problems, but we all understood what those problems were. Today, people stick to the news sources they agree with, creating a muddle of American public opinion and making it extremely difficult for policy makers to find the common ground needed to accomplish difficult and ambitious policy goals.

This is a significant challenge for the United States, and we have got to get on top of it sooner rather than later.

*Lee Hamilton is a senior advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar at the IU Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice at the IU O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.*



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With the passing of another year, we reflect on the events that changed our lives—some of them good, but for some, there have been better years. Fortunately, time has a way of healing, and letting us go forward—a promise of better years to come. Whatever last year brought you, we want you to know our family's thoughts are with you for a healthy and happy New Year.

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**DEATH NOTICE:**  
Donald Keller  
Died Nov. 30, 2020

## ► Obituary

### Donald Erick Keller, Jr.

GRANBY — Donald Keller, 65, passed away on Nov. 30, 2020 in Holyoke.

Donald was born in Erie, Pennsylvania on Jan. 13, 1955.

He is survived by his mother Ruby Keller, brother Douglas M. Keller, his children Felicia Hubacz, Erick Keller, and Daniel Keller, grandchildren Cody Keller, Ava Laine Keller, Brouche and Laydien Domingez. He was predeceased by his father, Donald E. Keller, Sr. in 2012.

Donald was a 1973 graduate of Granby High School. He worked for many years as a cement mason.

He was a loving father, devoted son and brother and an avid outdoorsman. He spent countless hours with his family and teaching his children and grandchildren about hunting, fishing, hiking, camping and the fine art of becoming a turkey shoot legend.

Donald had an easy-going way that matched the classic rock/country music that he loved and often played along to with his jaw harp. He was crazy for horror and sci-fi movies and always had a dirty joke or picture to share. Donald will be greatly missed!

Curran O'Brien was in charge of final arrangements. A celebration of life will be held in the summer.

Donations may be made in Donald's name to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Wildlands Fund at Mass Wildlife, 251 Causeway St., Suite 400, Boston, MA 02114.



### Town Reminder OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$120, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph.

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should be submitted through a funeral home to: [obits@turley.com](mailto:obits@turley.com).

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

## Granby

### Holiday offerings at the GPL

GRANBY — The following are upcoming holiday events by Granby Public Library.

#### Family movie night holiday theme DVD binge boxes

A binge box is a box/bag with three DVD's hand-selected for you by the librarians, a bag of microwave popcorn, an activity and a small gift to brighten your day.

Library staff will ask your child(ren)'s age(s). You can request a personalized box, feel free to ask for books, music.

To request a holiday binge box call the library 467-3320 or email the library at [granbypubliclibrary@gmail.com](mailto:granbypubliclibrary@gmail.com).

Library staff answer calls and emails on open library days Tuesday through Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

#### Kid - made ornaments to "gift or keep" kits

Stop by for a take and make ornament kit, in the library lobby from Tuesday through Friday from 10:30 a.m. to

#### Holiday books for sale .50

A selection of "like new" holiday books are on the bottom shelf of our Ornament Kit cart. Each book is .50.

Envelopes are provided — put the book payment in the envelope, then put the envelope in book drop.

#### Holiday craft bags for Jr/Sr High schoolers

Get crafty! Choose an ornament kit and some winter magic coloring pages at the Granby Library.

While supplies last. Stop by the library lobby during library hours from Tuesday to Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

### Local dance apparel and supply store to host virtual paint night

#### Staff report

EASTHAMPTON — Mary Ann's Dance and More, a local dance apparel store, is pleased to announce they are partnering with Valley Art Supplies to host a Virtual Paint Night.

Join Mary Ann's Dance and More on Friday, Jan. 15 from 6 to 7 p.m.

The group will be painting a 24x16 wooden set of pointe shoes! Kit includes wooden pointe shoes, paint, and paint-brush.

Pre-registration is required. Only 20 spots are available. The cost is \$25. Registration can be found on Eventbrite - <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/virtual-paint-nite-tickets-130110757779>

Opened since 2007, Mary Ann's Dance and More offers customers dance supplies, including apparel and accessories, as well as novelty and gift items that all customers can enjoy.

For additional information about the "Paint Night", please contact Mary Ann's Dance and More.

#### CHILDCARE

from page 3

Using guidelines from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, factors considered include positivity rate, cases per 100,000 and percentage of hospital beds in the area as well as others.

Miles said he wanted to address the last week. He expressed concerns about bringing the students back to the schools for the days leading up to the holiday break.

"The new cases that were reported last week versus this Tuesday were 27, which was flat from the prior week," Miles said. "That was good news, the change was zero percent. This week was significantly higher, there were 41 new cases which makes our cases per 100,000 go from 17 to 34 in one week, the rate of increase is 202% over that week, that is clearly high risk. Our numbers are going up and they're growing rapidly right now. This is the beginning of the predicted Thanksgiving numbers."

The board also approved bringing students back to the Mosier Elementary School, which will bring a total number of 143 people into the building.

Bonneville told the board staff in the building is already at 85% and bringing in more teachers would allow for class sizes to stay small, with an average of three to five students per classroom.

Committee members grappled with the risks of having younger students who need to be in the classroom with having an increased population in the building. Again the board voted in favor of bringing the "childcare cohort" back to the school, with four in favor and Miles opposing the motion.

School Committee Chair Kyle Belanger said he was basing his decision on a day-by-day basis and trusts in Bonneville to decide if the schools need to go remote.

"My approach proceeding is based on the fact that, with what I know tonight, and when and if things change, as they do every hour, we have empowered our superintendent to make these decisions," he said. "She already recommended that we send Plains all remote for two weeks. She has the power to do that for all of our schools."

Committee member Allison Schlachter said, "The numbers are scary and don't look good. On the other hand, I feel for these families whose needs are getting more urgent."

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Mia and Natalie Bodon dressed as Santa's workers, setting up shop in the back of a Chap de Laine's box truck during the Holiday Stroll.



Mr. and Mrs. Claus stole the show at Beers & Story during the Holiday Stroll on Dec. 4.



The Houle sisters stand next to a District 1 firetruck as they spread Christmas cheer on Dec. 4.



Members of Fire District 1 pose next to an illuminated fire truck on Dec. 4 during the Holiday Stroll.

### STROLL from page 1

celebration that drew dozens of townsfolk to the blacktop on the evening of Friday, Dec. 4.

"We've had a great turnout. It's very festive and there have been lots of smiles. It's just been a good night," said Jessica Bodon, a member of the Holiday Stroll Committee, who delved into how the initiative came to be.

"We contacted [Beers & Story], and there was no hesitation on their end. They just volunteered the use of their parking lot here and their electricity. Without having the event here, it may not have happened at all," said Bodon.

In addition to Mr. and Mrs. Claus, the South Hadley Electric Light Dept., the South Hadley Police Dept. and Fire District 1 all contributed to the festivities, as did a variety of local businesses and chamber members.

While the stroll took on a new look at a new location, the sense of togetherness that has defined the event through the

years was ever present at Beers & Story on Dec. 4.

Michele Lyman, owner of Serenity Yoga, was relieved when she learned that the stroll would not be cancelled, and the experience surpassed her expectations.

"I think we were all a little bit nervous about how it would come together; never doing this before," said Lyman. "The kids are just lighting up when they see Santa, and it just brings such warmth to my heart that they're at least able to see them and find a little bit of joy during a tough year."

Lt. Jason Houle of Fire District 1 joined several colleagues, standing next to a firetruck that was decked out in Christmas lights. Like Lyman, Houle pointed out that the evening was all about the kids.

"It's been a tough year for everybody so it's just great to see the kids enjoying themselves and the families enjoying themselves and being able to get out and experience the holidays and some sense of normalcy," said Houle.

Houle, who was accompanied by his two daughters.

Houle offered local youths his highest praise. He believes that people can learn from the way that South Hadley's children and teenagers have handled themselves during the pandemic.

"I think we really need to look at the way they're taking it and really look at ourselves like, 'It's not that bad; we'll get through this.' I don't think I've ever heard one kid complain about wearing a mask or any of the stuff they have to do," said Houle.

Where the stroll will be held next year, no one knows, but on Dec. 4, the exterior of Beers & Story was the only place that Chamber Vice President Regina Zebrowski wanted to be.

"Every year, it's amazing to be part of the stroll, and this year more than ever," said Zebrowski. "When COVID hit, we knew we had to reimagine it. It was so important to bring this to the community, and tonight just shows how much everybody really came together."

# HAPPY

# HOLIDAYS

Dr. Steven Markow, Optometrist

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## Jump balls eliminated, close contacted limited in modifications

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
[gscibelli@turley.com](mailto:gscibelli@turley.com)

REGION — Modifications for boys and girls basketball have been released and the game will look a little different, though significant limits to fan attendance will restrict how many can see the different-looking game.

In Western Massachusetts, the Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Conference has decided the first practices will not take place until Jan. 4. Sev-

eral other areas of the states are following suit. With no playoffs scheduled for the winter season, the various regions have the flexibility to decide when schools will begin and end play.

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association has set a Dec. 14 date as the soonest teams can start practicing. Several Central Massachusetts schools will start practicing then with contests likely to begin right after the new year.

One rule that will be consist-

ent throughout all sports is the mask mandate.

Participants must wear masks or face coverings at all times will participating in practices or games. The one caveat is that all schools have the ability to designate areas where athletes can take "mask breaks." There will be areas designated for those breaks, especially during basketball games where players going up and down the court many times wearing a mask may need to catch a breath when the whis-

tle blows. Because of the close contact involved with playing basketball, there was no way to play the sport safely without masks being worn.

The game will see modifications, but nothing too drastic and more along the way the timing, and setup of the game. Gameplay will be largely similar though different ideas were discussed to maintain distancing.

Like many other sports, the pre-game will be simplified. Only one captain will meet with

the referees prior to the game. Starting lineups will likely be announced, but the traditional "high-five" lines will not be allowed, along with handshakes with the opposing coach.

There will be emphasis during game play to enforce rules about freedom of movement and closely guarding opposing players. Defenders are not allowed to impede the progress of offensive

Please see **BASKETBALL**, page 11

## Academy team joining Pioneers organization

By Tim Peterson  
*Sports Correspondent*

LUDLOW — The Western Mass. Pioneers will be adding a USL Academy League soccer team in 2021. The New England Mutiny are also in the process of forming an Academy soccer team.

Both Academy soccer squads, which will be playing their home matches at historic Lusitano Stadium in Ludlow, will be made up of the top U16-U19 prospects from the Western Mass. area.

"In club soccer, you're limited to certain age groups," said Joe Ferrara, who's the owner of the Mutiny and the new Pioneers General Manager. "An academy soccer team allows talented players to play for one team regardless of their age."

The Pioneers had about 50 players try-out for the Academy League team in November.

"The Academy League team is a new program that we've added this year," said Pioneers head coach Federico Molinari. "Our main goal is to develop the best local soccer players from Western Mass. to hopefully play for the Pioneers in the future."

Molinari, along with the Pioneers assistant coaches will be coaching the Academy League team in 2021.

"We wanted to have the same coaching staff for both the USL 2 team (Pioneers) and the USL Academy team," Molinari said. "We want both of the teams to play the same type of style. I do like coaching the younger soccer players."

The plan is for the boys' Academy League team to play their home matches prior to the Pioneers matches. Both teams will also be traveling together to road matches.

The boys' team will be competing against eleven other teams in the Northeast Division of the USL Academy League.

Molinari has been coaching the Pioneers, who are the de-

fending Northeast Conference Champions of USL League Two, since 2012. The Pioneers weren't able to play any matches in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Pioneers did not suffer any losses during the 2019 regular season. They lost in conference finals and qualified for U.S. Open Cup, which wasn't held last summer. The Pioneers also qualified for the league playoffs in 2016.

"I really enjoy coaching the Pioneers and it was painful not being able to compete in any matches last year," Molinari said. "We won our Division title in 2019 and it was our best season since I've been coaching the team. We're now thinking about the 2021 season."

Ferrara gave his thoughts about adding a girl's Academy team for the Mutiny.

"We're looking for the top girl's prospects in the area to play for the girls academy team next year," he said. "The age group will be similar to the boy's side. The girl's academy team will probably have one or two older players."

The girls Academy team will be playing home matches before the Mutiny.

Jill Serafino is going to be the head coach of the girls academy squad. Serafino is currently the Mutiny General Manager and is an assistant coach. She's also an assistant coach for the women's soccer team at Springfield College.

The Mutiny, who celebrated their twentieth anniversary in 2019, played all of their home matches at Lusitano Stadium for the first time. The Mutiny also finished the 2019 regular season without a loss. They lost to the Lancaster Inferno in the United Women's Soccer Eastern Conference finals.

For more information on either Academy soccer teams please contact Joe Ferrara at [jferrara@wmpioneers.com](mailto:jferrara@wmpioneers.com) or 413-330-9775.



Photos by David Henry [www.sweetdogphotos.com](http://www.sweetdogphotos.com)

## Pioneers tryouts conclude

The Western Mass. Pioneers organization continued its tryouts for various age groups between Nov. 16 and 20, testing out the skills of many young people

throughout the region to fill its various teams for the upcoming spring season. The Pioneers are hopeful for a normal schedule in 2021.

## T-Birds make donation to cancer-related charities

SPRINGFIELD – On Nov. 30, the Springfield Thunderbirds' Foundation announced \$4,000 in donations to local cancer-related charities to cap off a successful Hockey Fights Cancer campaign during the month of November. Donations will be made to local cancer-related charities, including: Center for Human Development's Cancer House of Hope, Survivor Journeys, American Cancer Society - Relay for Life, Mercy Medical Center - Sister Caritas Cancer Center, and the national non-profit, Hockey Fights Cancer.

This season's campaign looked quite different from previous years. Typically, the Thunderbirds would host a Hockey Fights Cancer themed game at the end of November, complete with specialty lavender jerseys that are worn by the players and auctioned off after the game. This year, however, the campaign was activated on social media. Throughout the month of November, the Thunderbirds collected names on social media from fans for people they "fight for." New Valley Bank & Trust committed to donate \$5 for each submission received to the Thunderbirds' Foundation, for the first 500 submissions for a remarkable \$2,500 total donation. The names were then added to Hockey Fights Cancer placards that were placed on the windows leading to New Valley Bank & Trust's newly renovated headquarters in Monarch Place in downtown Springfield.

"As we take down the placards we are revealing our brand new headquarters location", said Jeff Sullivan, President and CEO of New Valley Bank. "We have been inspired by the personal messages of hope as we have been completing our construction on the other side of the glass. There are heroes all around us, from our friends and family fighting cancer to the work that the Thunderbirds and others do to alleviate hunger in the community. We at



Submitted photo

Thunderbirds Managing Partner Paul Picknelly, New Valley Bank & Trust President and CEO Jeff Sullivan, Thunderbirds Mascot Boomer, Thunderbirds President Nathan Costa, and Thunderbirds Vice President, Sales & Strategy Todd McDonald.

New Valley continue to be very optimistic about the return of the vibrant culture of downtown Springfield as we begin to see vaccine distribution and economic resurgence in 2021."

In addition to the contribution from New Valley Bank, the Thunderbirds also collected monetary donations on their foundation website, as well as holding a specialty game-worn jersey raffle from previous Hockey Fights Cancer games. The grand total generated through these campaigns equaled \$4,000.

"Hockey Fights Cancer has been an

incredibly important cause for our organization and across the AHL and NHL," said Thunderbirds President Nathan Costa. "Even though our season hasn't technically started yet, it was important to keep the cause front and center in our community, and we thank New Valley Bank & Trust for stepping up during this difficult time. We are grateful to all who supported the cause by purchasing a raffle ticket, making a donation to our foundation, or simply submitting a name of someone that you fight for."

## Senior photos from fall season wanted

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
gscibelli@turley.com

The fall season is nearing its end and Turley Publications has been all over the action.

But with this unpredictable season there have been temporary or in some cases, permanent stoppages in play, and we still want to help feature your athletes,

especially those who are seniors this year. We continue to ask for help on this season in order to bring the best coverage we can possibly manage and fill our pages with names and color.

We know that fans will be limited to the home crowds, but that is where you all come in.

If you attended any senior games and would like to see those photos in our pa-

pers, we welcome submitted photos from those events and information about graduating seniors who participated in Fall 1 sports.

We also welcome any additional information about other major achievements. Send any and all information and photos for inclusion to [sports@turley.com](mailto:sports@turley.com).

## Follow Turley Sports on Instagram

Turley Publications sports department has recently joined Instagram. You can find our account by searching "turleysports." We will regularly feature samples of photos that you will see in our publications on a weekly basis. Please follow and share with your friends and loved ones. We will be featuring photos from all 11 of our sports sections in the coming weeks, but as always, you can see all the photos that appear by subscribing to your local paper or picking up a copy in your community.

### BASKETBALL from page 10

players, and will enforce the five-second rule on players who are being closely guarded.

The jump ball will be eliminated in favor of a simple coin toss to give possession of the ball to one team. Alternating possession will then prevail like the rest of the game typically does.

Free throws will look a bit different with just four players allowed with the shooter. Normally six players are allowed. When a player is awarded two or three free throws, they will shoot alone until the final shot to limit the time players are in close contact.

One bigger chance that affects the end-of-game strategy for teams is the "intentional" fouls used to try and gain possessions for a team that is trailing. A team will look to intentionally foul for that purpose will inform the referee of that intention, and then lightly tag the player with the ball upon inbounding. The referee would then blow the whistle.

Jump balls will be whistled quicker in order to limit close contact.

Rosters are limited to no more than 15 players and three coaches on the bench, though many teams do not carry more than 12 or 13 players. The MIAA is also strongly discouraging

## Star Speedway announces 2021 schedule

EPPING, N.H. – Star Speedway's 2021 schedule includes multiple major events, a full slate of weekly racing series divisions ready to race for a championship and the thrills and spills of staple shows to begin and end the season.

Fans will get a taste of Supermodifieds, Late Models, Modifieds, Midgents, Super Late Models, Trucks, Street Stocks and more over the course of more than 22 events of racing from April through October.

The schedule is headlined by two events for the Tri Track Open Modified Series (May 29 and July 24), including a new Memorial Day weekend show and the 10th annual SBM Classic in July. The 56th annual Star Classic returns, with a three-day show from Sept. 17 to 19, while there are countless other special events including memorial races and extra-distance shows planned. The Granite State Pro Stock Series is back at Star for two dates -- May 8 and a new Sunday special as part of the Star Classic weekend, Sept. 19.

Continuing tradition, the season begins with the Spring Bunny Brawl on April 24, and ends with the two-day Howler weekend, Oct. 23 and 24. Star will give teams, drivers and fans one week off each month during the season, with off nights scheduled for May 22, June 12, July 17, Aug. 28 and Sept. 4.

The J&S Paving 350 Supermodifieds will continue to honor some of the best of the past at Star Speedway, with six special events as part of their 10-race schedule for 2021. A champion will be crowned on Sept. 11. Major memorial events planned include the inaugural Dennis McKenna Memorial race as part of the Star Classic:

Bob Webber Sr. Memorial (May 15)  
Jen Garland Memorial (June 19)  
Krupski Cup (June 26)  
Marco Turcotte Memorial (July 24)  
Jim Belfiore Memorial (Aug. 14)  
Dennis McKenna Memorial at Star Classic (Sept. 18)

The Ken Izzett Construction Late Models are back with their own nine-race slate, headlined by an Independence Day weekend special on July 3, a 75-lapper, and a 100-lap feature on Aug. 21. The Late Models will also return to the Star Classic, this year as part of a Friday slate. The Late Model champion will be crowned on Sept. 11.

The MLM Diagnostic Fast 40 series return for the Woody's Street Stocks as part of the division's 16-race schedule. There will be four races in the 40-lap series (April 24, May 29, June 26 and Aug. 7), while the season will begin at the Bunny Brawl and end with the title battle on Sept. 26. The Street Stocks will continue to run their 50-lap race to end the season at the Howler, Oct. 23.

The EXIT Realty Pro Truck Series rumbles into the New Hampshire oval for two dates of their own, slated for events on Aug. 7 and Star Classic Sunday, Sept. 19. The North East Mini

Please see **SCHEDULE**, page 12

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# ► Public Safety

## Tebow takes over TRIAD

By Dalton Zbierski  
Staff Writer

SOUTH HADLEY – On the morning of Dec. 9, South Hadley Police Ofc. Emily Tebow was chosen to lead South Hadley TRIAD, a program designed to protect local seniors. Tebow fills a position that was left vacant by Ofc. Steve Fleming, who retired this spring.

As South Hadley's TRIAD Officer, Tebow will work closely with the Hampshire County Sheriff's Office, Northwestern District Attorney David Sullivan and the South Hadley TRIAD and S.A.L.T. Council. Tebow began embracing the role immediately after learning of her selection.

"I'm most excited about being part of the team. I heard that it's a great team to be a part of; the Sheriff's Office, the District Attorney's Office," said Tebow. "I've already reached out to a couple people today to introduce myself. I'm very excited to be part of a well-established team and will contribute as best I can."

Since its establishment in 1994, South Hadley TRIAD has bridged the gap between seniors, law enforcement and service providers in an effort to improve the quality of life of elderly residents. South Hadley Police Chief Jennifer Gundersen listed several of Tebow's responsibilities.

"She's going to really focus on some of the fraud and scams that we have in the community," said Gundersen. "We have a lot of victimization of seniors through scams, and Emily will try to really work on that and to see if there's just a couple more things that we can be doing to communicate these to the seniors."

Tebow was sworn in as a South Hadley officer on July 28 and expressed interest in assuming the role of TRIAD Officer. Her affinity for seniors influenced her decision to pursue the position.

"It's just been something I've always been passionate about," said Tebow. "Seniors are one of our most vulnerable popula-



Courtesy photo

**South Hadley TRIAD Ofc. Emily Tebow was officially named to her new position on Dec. 9 and is excited to serve and protect the town's elderly population.**

tions and seeing them either get taken advantage of or be falling through the cracks is something that I hope to prevent from happening."

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, isolation amongst the senior population grows worse. Tebow plans to capitalize on opportunities to engage South Hadley's elderly residents and hopes to learn from them in the process.

"We all come from such diverse backgrounds as it is, but people who have been on this planet longer than I have definitely have more life experiences," said Tebow. "I enjoy the social part of it and hearing their stories; I enjoy hearing about their life experiences, their families, what they've done for work and all that. Their lives and experiences have an impact on others so it's good to be a part of and be an ear for them to have listen."

Tebow assumes the position following Fleming's tenure as the town's TRIAD Officer. Fleming established himself as a key resource, connecting seniors not only to the department but to the community at large.

"Steve so cared about his seniors; he started some great programs," said Gundersen.

"Sand for Seniors" he start-

ed, the 'Are-You-Okay' program he started, he started the house-numbering program and he was so committed to them. I think that is why it is such a strong TRIAD Council right now. They have great volunteers and great internal leadership, but I think that comes from the confidence that they had in Steve."

Tebow served as a dispatcher in the station for six years prior to being sworn into the force. She said she is excited to begin the next chapter of her law enforcement career and thanked those who offered her a chance.

"I've very appreciative for the opportunity to be a police officer and am fortunate that the Chief trusts me to take on this role, being a new officer," said Tebow. "Everybody in this department is really team-oriented so it's good to have that confidence behind you, and it's great to be part of such a well-oiled machine and well-working team."

More information pertaining to South Hadley TRIAD can be located at <https://www.southhadley.org/334/TRIAD>. Tebow can be reached [teboe@southhadleypolice.org](mailto:teboe@southhadleypolice.org) or by dialing 413-538-5050 ext. 6403.

*Dalton Zbierski is a Staff Writer and can be reached at [dzbierski@turley.com](mailto:dzbierski@turley.com).*

### SCHEDULE from page 11

Stock Tour returns to Star three times -- including dates on June 5, Aug. 7 and Sept. 26. The annual NEMST 4 Cylinder Nationals main event will be run during their September date, moved from Classic weekend.

Two Wild And Whacky Wednesday night races are set for June 23 and Aug. 4, with both nights showcasing 4 and 6/8 Cylinder enduro races. The Six Shooters join the June show, while the August race is

headlined by the Mia's Jewelry Boutique Slingshots and spectator one-on-one drag races. NELCAR returns to Star with their Legends Cars division in 2021, with dates on May 8 and Saturday, Sept. 18.

The three-day Star Classic will honor the late Bobby Webber Sr., beginning on Friday, Sept. 17, headlined by a 100-lap race for the Modified Racing Series, joined by the Late Models, Pure Stocks and Slingshots. On Saturday, the day full of winged warriors is back with the ISMA 125, Dennis McKenney 350 Supermodified memorial, NEEMA Midgets, NEEMA Lites and NELCAR Legends Cars.

On Sunday, the weekend ends with a 100-lapper for the Granite State Pro Stock Series, races for the EXIT Trucks, Clasic Lites, Street Stocks and Six

Shooters.

The Six Shooters will run 13 races, headlined by the Don & Aline Coster Memorial (July 10) and the Liz Paradise Memorial (Oct. 23). The Slingshots are set for 14 battles of their own, with a 40-lap special scheduled for part of the Aug. 4 show. There are 13 races for the Pure Stocks, races for the Classic Lites, and multiple enduro races for the 4, 6 and 8 cylinders.

The track will hold two swap meets -- one to start the season on April 17, from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., and one in the fall, a two-day special on October 30 and 31 from 6:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The 2021 schedule is subject to change due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information visit Star Speedway at [StarSpeedwayNH.com](http://StarSpeedwayNH.com) and follow the track on social media.

## Prioritize safety during holiday activities

**REGION** – Traveling for the holidays might not be on the menu due to COVID-19, but comfort food, festive decorations, and cozy nights in are sure to lift everyone's spirits. Unfortunately, these activities can often lead to fire, with Christmas Day and Christmas Eve as two of the top days each year for home fires caused by cooking and candles.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) encourages everyone to keep safety in mind in order to lessen the chance that a fire will disrupt their holiday celebrations.

"For a lot of people, December tops the list for the most heartwarming time of year, but it's also a leading month for home fires in the U.S.," said Lorraine Carli, vice president of Outreach and Advocacy for NFPA. "Carefully decorating your home and mindfully cooking your meals can help make your holidays safer."

Following are NFPA statistics highlighting the increased risk of fire during the holidays:

### Decorations

More than half (51%) of the home decoration fires in December are started by candles, compared to one-third (32%) in January to November.

From 2014 to 2018, an estimated average of 770 home structure fires per year began with decorations, excluding Christmas trees. These fires caused an average of two civilian deaths, 30 civilian injuries, and \$11.1 million in direct property damage.

erty damage per year.

More than two of every five (44%) decoration fires occurred because the decoration was too close to a heat source, such as a candle or hot equipment.

One-fifth (21%) of the home decoration fires occurred in December, while 10% happened in January.

### Christmas trees

Fires caused by Christmas trees are uncommon, but they are more likely to be serious when they do occur.

Between 2014 to 2018, U.S. fire departments responded to an average 160 home fires that started with Christmas trees per year. These fires caused an annual average of two civilian deaths, 14 civilian injuries, and \$10.3 million in direct property damage.

Electrical distribution or lighting equipment was involved in 45% of home Christmas tree fires.

In more than one-fifth (22%) of the Christmas tree fires, some type of heat source, such as a candle or equipment, was too close to the tree.

### Cooking

Cooking is the leading cause of reported home fires and home fire injuries and the second leading cause of home fire deaths.

An average of 470 home cooking fires were reported per day in 2018.

Thanksgiving is the peak day for home cooking fires, fol-

**Please see SAFETY, page 15**

## Hampshire Sheriff alerts residents to phone scam

**REGION** – Hampshire County Sheriff Patrick Cahillane is alerting residents to a phone scam being perpetrated in the Pioneer Valley.

The scam, commonly known as "phone spoofing" or "caller ID spoofing," is when a scammer uses caller ID spoofing technology to impersonate the phone numbers of local businesses or government agencies in attempt to acquire money or some sort of personal information.

On Monday, Dec. 7, Sheriff Cahillane said his office had received several calls from area residents reporting that they had received calls from a person identifying themselves as an employee of the Hampshire Sheriff's Office seeking money due to court charges, and then requesting payment via gift cards.

"The Hampshire Sheriff's Office will never, never, call private citizens and demand payment or accept payment of any kind over the phone," Sheriff Cahillane said. "If you receive such a call, the best tactic is to simply hang up. Anyone receiving such a fraudulent call might also consider contacting their lo-

cal police department, or notifying my office at 413-584-5911. The FBI website – [www.fbi.gov](http://www.fbi.gov) – also has information about how to avoid such scams."

Here are some additional tips from the Better Business Bureau on what to do if a scammer calls:

- Hang up – don't press any buttons and, if you received a voicemail, don't call the scammer back. We all like to have the last word, but returning the phone call may just give the scammer information they can use.

- Don't trust caller ID – scammers have technology that lets them display any number or organization name on your screen.

- Never give out any financial information – if you did not initiate the call, do not provide bank account, credit card or Social Security numbers over the phone unless you have thoroughly done your research and verified the caller.

- The duty of the Hampshire Sheriff's Office is to protect public safety," Sheriff Cahillane added. "We want everyone to stay safe, and to remember that my office will never make these kinds of phone calls."

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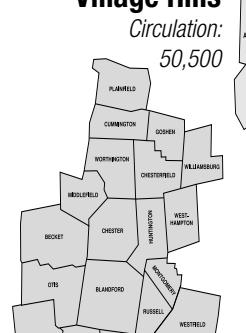
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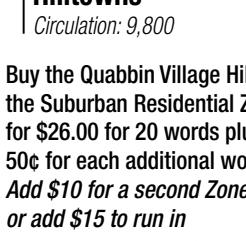
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<b>STUMP GRINDING</b> <b>DL &amp; G STUMP GRINDING</b> Grinding stumps of all sizes, insured & certified. Senior discounts. Call Dave 413-478-4212	<b>\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$</b> <b>Get cash for as is unwanted autos</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cars/trucks</li><li>• Free towing</li><li>• All makes</li><li>• All models</li></ul> <b>413-246-5351</b> ask for Joe				

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## ► Public Notices

### GRANBY PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

In accordance with MGL Ch. 40A, Sec. 9, the Granby Planning Board will hold a virtual public hearing using GoToMeeting on **December 21 at 5:05 PM**. The nature of the hearing is to consider the petition of Properties Plus, LLC, Applicant and Owner, seeking a Site Plan Approval under 5.13, Business Estate Lots, of the Granby Zoning Bylaws for a metal building that will be used for storage of business and company property on Lot 1 at 121 West State Street, Granby, MA.

**Members of the public can attend virtually by visiting <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/271907781> or by phone at +1 (408) 650-3123 using access code 271-907-781.**

The complete applications and plans are available for public inspection during regular business hours by appointment at the Selectmen's Office located in the Granby Senior Center Building, 2nd Floor, 10-B West State Street, Granby, MA 01033.

Additionally, copies of the plan and application may be inspected on the Planning Board's web page at <https://www.granby-ma.gov/planning-board/events/23196>.

Anyone wishing information and/or to be heard on this matter should appear at the time and place designated.

James Trompke, Chair  
Granby Planning Board  
12/04, 12/11/2020

### SALE OF MOTOR VEHICLES UNDER G.L. c.255 Sec.39A

Notice is hereby given by **Hampshire Towing, 650 New Ludlow Rd., South Hadley, MA 01075**, pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 255, section 39A, that a **SEALED BID** auction with bids due **Monday, December 21, 2020 at 9 a.m.** Vehicles can be viewed by appointment only December 16 and December 17, 2020 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Please call 413-534-5373 for appointments.

The following motor vehicles will be sold to satisfy our garage keeper's lien

thereon for storage, towing charges, care and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicles:

**2005 Toyota Corolla**  
1NXBR32E45Z481407

Arianna Gregoire  
29 Quincy Ave,  
Chicopee, MA 01020

**2008 Toyota Corolla**  
2T1BR32E08C858286

Geraldine R. Gross  
5 Colonial Vlg Dr. Apt 6  
Arlington, Ma 02474

**1988 Suzuki Samurai**  
JS4JC51CXJ4246921 Angel Rivera  
584 Chicopee St. Apt2R  
Chicopee, MA 01013

**2004 Jeep Liberty**  
1J4GL48K84W240848

Lydia Rivera  
56 Maple St Apt 218  
Florence, MA 01062

**2005 Ford Escape**  
1FMYU03Z45KB35569

Donald R. Dunckley  
43 Michael Ave  
Bellport, NY 11713

**2005 Mazda Mazd6**  
1YVFP80C255M75426

Sherry D. Salazar  
132 Beauchamp Ter  
Chicopee, MA 01020

**2003 Subaru Forester**  
JF1SG65613H756811  
Anthony Filion  
904B West Street  
Ludlow, MA 01056

**2006 Honda Civic**  
2HGFA16856H520601  
Tania Feliciano  
456 Maple Street #2RF  
Holyoke, MA 01040

**Quad**  
JSAAJ43A612110796 No Record Found

**18' Camper**  
4YDT3072344215431  
Todd Fondakowski  
29 Loudville Road  
West Hampton, MA 01027

**1998 Honda Civic**  
2HGEJ6670WH509859  
Bryan Velez- Morales  
117 Bloomfield Street  
Springfield, MA 01108

**2006 Suzuki DR-Z 400sm**  
JS1SK44A462102003  
Angel Rivera  
584 Chicopee St  
Chicopee, MA 01013

**2007 Ford Edge**  
2FMDK46C57BB49772  
Adam McNair  
237 Stapleton Road  
Springfield, MA 01109

**Quad Ku1500**  
LAGAKUFR741000979 No Records Found  
No Records Found  
No Records Found

**2007 Nissan Sentra**  
3N1AB61EX7L676774  
Johnathan Cartagena  
24 Ringgold Street  
Springfield, MA 01107

**2001 Subaru Outback**  
4S3BH675517630255

Lydia Lozada  
416 Canon Circle  
Springfield, Ma 01118  
12/04, 12/11, 12/18/2020



R	A	M	P	S		P	M	T		R	E	D	D
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P	O	R	C		S	A	G	A	N	F	L	O	E
T	E	L	E	V	I	S	E	D		S	E	A	L
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T	H	U	D		S	O	P	H	O	M	O	R	E
P	A	L	E	S		P	A	R		E	R	E	C
				M	A	C	A	R	O	N	I	Y	A
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P	A	N	E	S		G	E	M	I	N	A	T	E
P	R	A	T		M	A	R	A	S		B	A	B
R	E	D	E	I	B	I	S		D	I	R	A	C
O	S	A	R	D	Y	N			P	R	O	N	E

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1 Email all notices to [notices@turley.com](mailto:notices@turley.com)

2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.

3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Mondays at noon, Fridays noon for Monday holidays.

visit [www.publicnotices.turley.com](http://www.publicnotices.turley.com)

## Seniors ◀

# Hidden walls, hidden mills

HOLYOKE – On Thursday, Dec. 17 at 6:30 p.m., Wistariahurst will host Hidden Walls, Hidden Mills: Reading the Lost Industrial Landscape of the Western Mass Hills a live, virtual program presented by Pleun Bouricius. This program is free and open to all but pre-registration is required.

Get ready for a history adventure! In a mixed video and slide show presentation focusing on Plainfield and Leverett, historian Pleun Bouricius will explore how to “read” the forested landscape, find cellar holes, understand mill sites, and learn how water mills were situated and worked.

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, Western Massachusetts was largely shorn of trees; trees shaped and cut in hundreds of mills that took advantage of fast-moving streams on steep hillsides. Out-competed and passed by during the nineteenth century, this industry left an indelible imprint on the land.

Now largely forested, the landscape is dotted with few farms and some houses – and any number of publicly accessible woods. Everywhere are stone sites, ready for a passer-by trying to imagine lives lived on a bare windswept hillside or next to a stream ready to sweep away a mill building in the next freshet.



Courtesy photo  
An online event, Hidden Walls, Hidden Mills: Reading the Lost Industrial Landscape of the Western Mass Hills, will be held on Dec. 17.

This program has been specially designed to address the needs of area seniors, many of whom continue to be socially isolated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The program is supported through a Community Development Block Grant - COVID-19 Grant to address, prevent, and respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic that is administered through the Holyoke Office of Community Development and has been planned in consultation with the Holyoke Council on Aging. Additional support has been provided through NEH CARES Act funding granted by Mass Humanities.

To register for Hidden Walls, Hidden Mills: Reading the Lost Industrial Landscape of the Western Mass Hills or any future programs, please visit [www.Wistariahurst.org](http://www.Wistariahurst.org) or contact Eileen Maginnis at the Holyoke Council on Aging at [maginnise@holyoke.org](mailto:maginnise@holyoke.org). If you have an idea for a topic you'd like to be considered for a future Wistariahurst session, please contact [info@wistariahurst.org](mailto:info@wistariahurst.org). Future virtual programs will focus on a diverse range of historical and cultural topics including programs on nature, art, history, travel, and social justice.

## CISA offers gift bag of local treats

REGION – Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture is offering for sale a gift bag stuffed with locally grown and produced foods. Just in time for year-end and holiday gifting, this brand-new tote bag features artwork by artist Arielle Jessop, and includes goodies from regional farms and food producers. Bags must be ordered by Dec. 13 for pickup at locations around the Valley on Dec. 19.

“We have really missed sharing local food with our supporters this year, having cancelled our events because of the pandemic,” said Philip Korman, CISA’s Executive Director. “We put together this gift bag as a way of sharing in the local harvest

with our community, from a distance. Sales benefit the producers we’re sourcing from, proceeds will benefit CISA, and the bags make great gifts -- to friends and family, colleagues and neighbors, or even yourself!”

There are two different bag sizes available, which will include items from the following farms and specialty producers: Atlas Farm, Apex Orchards, Back Roads Granola, Bergeron Sugar Shack, Bug Hill Farm, Carr’s Ciderhouse, Clarkdale Fruit Farms, Effie’s Homemadef, Fat Toad Farm, Kitchen Garden Farm, Mother’s Jam, Old Friends Farm, Pioneer Valley Popcorn, Stockbridge Farm and Taza Chocolate.

To order or find more information, visit [buylocalfood.org](http://buylocalfood.org).

CISA is a nationally recognized organization of farmers, community members, and advocates working together to strengthen farms and engage the community to build the local food economy. Working in western Massachusetts and the region for over 25 years, CISA offers assistance to farmers, provides farm shares for low-income seniors, and runs the nation’s oldest agricultural “Buy Local” campaign - “Be a Local Hero, Buy Locally Grown.” Find out more about our work to double the amount of local food in our diets at [buylocalfood.org](http://buylocalfood.org) or call 413-665-7100.

### SAFETY from page 12

lowed by Christmas Day and Christmas Eve.

Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home cooking fires.

#### Candles

Between 2014 to 2018 U.S. fire departments responded to an annual average of 7,610 home structure fires caused by candles. These fires caused an average 81 civilian fire deaths, 677 civilian fire injuries, and \$278 million in direct property damage annually.

On average, 21 home candle fires were reported each day. Three of every five (60%) candle fires started when something that could burn, such as furniture, mattresses or bedding, curtains, or decorations, was too close to the candle. Candle fires peak in December. January ranked second.

Nearly three times as many fires started by candles were reported on Christmas (an average of 58 Christmas fires) as the daily average.

Find a wide variety of tips and resources surrounding holiday fire safety on the NFPA Winter Holidays page. For more releases and other announcements about NFPA initiatives, research and resources, please visit the this NFPA press room.

#### About the National Fire Protection Association

Founded in 1896, NFPA is a global self-funded non-profit organization devoted to eliminating death, injury,

property and economic loss due to fire, electrical and related hazards. The association delivers information and knowledge through more than 300 consensus codes and standards, research, training, education, outreach and advocacy; and by partnering with others who share an interest in furthering the NFPA mission. For more information, visit [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org). All NFPA codes and standards can be viewed online for free at [www.nfpa.org/freeaccess](http://www.nfpa.org/freeaccess).

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As a free service for our readers we accept and will print when space allows community event photos and announcements. Just scan the QR code above and send us your photos and any information.

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**ONLY ONE NAME PER LETTER PLEASE.**

\*\$10.95 for the first one, \$9.95 for each additional. Please include phone number. Make copies of this form as needed. Expires 12/18/20.

CHILD'S NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

SHIPPING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

**PAYMENT ENCLOSED:**

CHECK  VISA  MASTERCARD  AMEX  DISCOVER

CREDIT CARD # \_\_\_\_\_

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PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

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Santa at Turley, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069 or call 413-283-8393 or email: [ar@turley.com](mailto:ar@turley.com), (Subject: Santa) for immediate assistance.

Quantities are limited. Turley Publications reserves the right to end offer at any time. Payment will be returned if offer expires due to limited quantity being sold out or multiple names per letter. Sales are based on a first come first serve basis.



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